

secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."

Rev. xxii, 14. "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."

"THE WORD OF THE LORD ENDURETH FOREVER."

AN

# Appeal to Mothers.

THE

## GREAT CAUSE

OF THE

PHYSICAL, MENTAL, AND MORAL RUIN OF MANY  
OF THE CHILDREN OF OUR TIME.

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BY ELLEN G. WHITE.  
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## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

THE matter contained in the following pages having been left at our disposal, we feel impelled by a strong sense of Christian duty and love of humanity, to bring it before the public in its present form. We believe that too much importance cannot be attached to this subject, and that no false delicacy should prevent thorough inquiry and investigation upon a question in which the present and future welfare of multitudes is involved. As a people, who profess to be looking for the coming of the Lord, and preparing for translation into his holy presence, perhaps we have too long kept silent on this great source of physical, mental and moral pollution, and a high duty and responsibility remains to be discharged in this matter.

We would therefore earnestly appeal to parents and guardians to give this Work a thorough and judicious circulation. The flood-gates of corruption are being opened upon the world; and in no way, perhaps, is Satan more speedily accomplishing the *utter* ruin of a fallen and fast degenerating race than through the channel of unchastity and licentiousness. In the following pages the evil is fully pointed out; and to many, we doubt not, they will also appear as a friendly hand pointing out the remedy and the way of escape. Again we say, therefore, let the Work be faithfully circulated. It would perhaps be well for every



member of the family to possess a copy for his and her own personal possession. And remember that it will not be enough to merely place this work in the hands of the young. Cease not till you have good evidence that the moral sense of the individuals is so aroused, that they will study and faithfully heed the instruction herein contained.

And to the young we would say, As you value health, happiness and life, a sound mind, an approving conscience, and a high moral sensibility, pass not over this subject lightly, nor forget the warning herein given you. To you there may seem to be no danger, but the danger is all the greater because so insidious; and being instructed yourselves, you may be able to raise the warning voice to others who are ignorantly sacrificing themselves upon the altar of this Moloch of passion.

But if considerations which connect themselves with this present life are not sufficient to move you, look beyond this state of being, cast your eye over into eternity, ponder its effects upon your eternal destiny, and as you value eternal life, shun a vice which will forever debar you from the presence of Him who has said, "Be ye holy for I am holy."

#### TRUSTEES

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## APPEAL TO MOTHERS

RELATIVE TO THE GREAT CAUSE OF THE PHYSICAL, MENTAL AND MORAL RUIN OF MANY OF THE CHILDREN OF OUR TIME.

MY SISTERS, my apology for addressing you on this subject is, I am a mother, and feel alarmed for those children and youth who by solitary vice are ruining themselves for this world, and for that which is to come. Let us closely inquire into this subject from the physical, mental and moral points of view.

Mothers, let us first view the results of this vice upon the physical strength. Have you not marked the lack of healthful beauty, of strength, and power of endurance in your dear children? Have you not felt saddened as you have watched the progress of disease upon them which has baffled your skill, and that of physicians? You listen to numerous complaints of headache, catarrh, dizziness, nervousness, pain in the shoulders and side, loss of appetite, pain in the back and limbs, wakeful, feverish nights, of tired feelings in the morning, and great exhaustion after exercising? As you have seen the beauty of health disappearing, and have marked the sallow countenance, or the unnaturally flushed face, have you been aroused sufficiently to look



beneath the surface, to inquire into the cause of this physical decay? Have you observed the astonishing mortality among the youth?

And have you not noticed that there was a deficiency in the mental health of your children? That their course seemed to be marked with extremes? That they were absent-minded? That they started nervously when spoken to? And were easily irritated? Have you not noticed when occupied upon a piece of work they would look dreamingly, as though the mind was elsewhere? When they came to their senses, they were unwilling to own the work as coming from their hands, it was so full of mistakes, and showed such marks of inattention? Have you not been astonished at their wonderful forgetfulness? The most simple and oft-repeated directions would be soon forgotten. They might be quick to learn, but it would be of no special benefit to them. The mind would not retain it. What they might learn through hard study, when they would use their knowledge, is missing, lost through their sieve-like memory. Have you not noticed their reluctance to engage in active labor? And their unwillingness to perseveringly accomplish that which they have undertaken, which taxes the mental as well as the physical strength? The tendency of many is to live in indolence.

Have you not witnessed the gloomy sadness upon the countenance, and frequent exhibitions of a morose temper in those who used to be cheerful, kind and affectionate? They are easily excited to jealousy, disposed

to look upon the dark side, and when you are laboring for their good, imagine that you are their enemy, that you needlessly reprove and restrain them?

And have you not enquired where will all this end, as you have looked upon your children from a moral point of view? Have you not noticed the increase of disobedience in children, and their manifestations of ingratitude, and impatience under restraint? Have you not been alarmed at their disregard of parental authority, which has bowed down the hearts of their parents with grief and prematurely sprinkled their heads with grey hairs? Have you not witnessed the lack of that noble frankness in your children which they once possessed, and which you admired in them? Some children even express in their countenances a hardened look of depravity. Have you not felt distressed and anxious as you have seen the strong desire in your children to be with the opposite sex, and the overpowering disposition they possessed to form attachments when quite young? With your daughters, the boys have been the theme of conversation, and with your sons it has been the girls. They manifest preference for particular ones, and your advice and warnings produce but little change. Blind passion destroys sensible considerations. And although you may check the outward manifestations, and you credit the promises of amendment yet to your sorrow you find there is no change, only to conceal the matter from you. There are still secret attachments, and stolen



interviews. They follow their willful course, and are controlled by their passions, until you are startled by perhaps a premature marriage, or are brought to shame by those who should by their noble course of conduct, bring to you respect and honor. The cases of premature marriage multiply. Boys and girls enter upon the marriage relation with unripe love, immature judgment, without noble, elevated feelings, and take upon themselves the marriage vows, wholly led by their boyish, girlish, passions. They choose for themselves often without the knowledge of the mother who has watched over them, and cared for them, from their earliest infancy.

Attachments formed in childhood have often resulted in a very wretched union or in a disgraceful separation. Early connections, if formed without the consent of parents, have seldom proved happy. The young affections should be restrained until the period arrives when sufficient age and experience will make it honorable, and safe to unfetter them. Those who will not be restrained will be in danger of dragging out an unhappy existence. A youth not out of his teens, is a poor judge of the fitness of a person, as young as himself, to be his companion for life. After their judgment becomes more matured, they view themselves bound for life to each other, perhaps not at all calculated to make each other happy. Then instead of making the best of their lot, recriminations take place, the breach widens, until there is settled indifference and neglect. To them there

is nothing sacred in the word home. The very atmosphere is poisoned by unloving words, and bitter reproaches. The offspring of such are placed in a much more unfavorable condition than were their parents. With such surroundings, such examples, what could be expected of them if time should continue? Mothers, the great cause of these physical, mental and moral evils is secret vice which inflames the passions, fevers the imagination, and leads to licentiousness. This vice is laying waste the constitution, and preparing the young for disease of almost every description. And shall we permit our children to pursue a course of self-destruction?

Mothers, view your children from a religious stand point. It gives you pain to see your children feeble in body and mind; but does it not cause you still greater grief to see them almost dead to spiritual things, so that they have but little desire for goodness, beauty of character, and holy purposes? Secret vice is the destroyer of high resolve, earnest endeavor, and strength of will to form a good religious character. All who have any true sense of what is embraced in being a Christian, know that the followers of Christ are under obligation as his disciples, to bring all their passions, their physical powers and mental faculties, into perfect subordination to his will. Those who are controlled by their passions cannot be followers of Christ. They are too much devoted to the service of their master, the originator of every evil, to leave



their corrupt habits, and choose the service of Christ.

Godly mothers will inquire, with the deepest concern, Will our children continue to practice habits which will unfit them for any responsible position in this life? Will they sacrifice comeliness, health, intellect, and all hope of Heaven, everything worth possessing, here and hereafter, to the demon passion? May God grant that it may be otherwise, and that our children who are so dear to us, may listen to the voice of warning, and choose the path of purity and holiness.

How important that we teach our children self-control from their very infancy, and learn them the lesson of submitting their wills to us. If they should be so unfortunate as to learn wrong habits, not knowing all the evil results, they can be reformed by appealing to their reason, and convincing them that such habits ruin the constitution, and affect the mind. We should show them that whatever persuasions corrupt persons may use to quiet their awakened fears, and lead them to still indulge this pernicious habit, whatever may be their pretense, they are their enemies and the Devil's agents. Virtue and purity are of great value. These precious traits are of heavenly origin. They make God our friend, and unite us firmly to his throne.

Satan is controlling the minds of the young, and we must work resolutely, and faithfully to save them. Very young children practice this vice, and it grows upon them and strengthens with their years, until every noble faculty of

body and soul is being degraded. Many might have been saved if they had been carefully instructed in regard to the influence of this practice upon their health. They were ignorant of the fact that they were bringing much suffering upon themselves. Children who are experienced in this vice, seem to be bewitched by the Devil until they can impart their vile knowledge to others, even teaching very young children this practice.

Mothers, you cannot be too careful in preventing your children from learning low habits. It is easier to learn evil, than to eradicate it after it is learned. Neighbors may permit their children to come to your house, to spend the evening and the night with your children. Here is a trial, and a choice for you, to run the risk of offending your neighbors by sending their children to their own home, or gratify them, and let them lodge with your children, and thus expose them to be instructed in that knowledge which would be a life-long curse to them.

To save my children from being corrupted I have not allowed them to sleep in the same bed, or in the same room, with other boys, and have, as occasion has required when traveling, made a scanty bed upon the floor for them, rather than have them lodge with others. I have tried to keep them from associating with rough, rude boys, and have presented inducements before them to make their employment at home cheerful and happy. By keeping their minds and hands occupied, they have had but little time, or disposition, to play



in the street with other boys, and obtain a street education.

My misfortune, which occurred when I was about nine years old, ruined my health. I looked upon this as a great calamity, and murmured because of it. In a few years I viewed the matter differently. I then looked upon it in the light of a blessing. I regard it thus now. Because of sickness I was kept from society which preserved me in blissful ignorance of the secret vices of the young. After I was a mother, by the private death-bed confessions of some females, who had completed the work of ruin, I first learned that such vices existed. But I had no just conception of the extent of this vice, and the injury the health sustained by it, until a still later period.

The young indulge to quite an extent in this vice before the age of puberty without experiencing to any very great degree the evil results upon the constitution. But at this critical period, while merging into manhood and womanhood, nature makes them feel the violation of her laws.

As the mother sees her daughter languid and dispirited, with but little vigor, easily irritated, start suddenly and nervously when spoken to, she feels alarmed, and has fears that her daughter will not be able to reach womanhood with a good constitution. She relieves her, if possible, from active labor, and anxiously consults a physician, who prescribes for her without making searching inquiries, and suggesting to the unsuspecting mother the probable cause of her daughter's illness. Se-

cret indulgence is in many cases the only real cause of the numerous complaints of the young. This vice is laying waste the vital forces, and debilitating the system, and until the habit, which produced the result, is broken off, there can be no permanent cure. To relieve the young from healthful labor is the worst possible course a parent can pursue. Their life is then aimless, the mind and hands unoccupied, the imagination active, and left free to indulge in thoughts that are not pure and healthful. This gives them opportunity for a more free indulgence in that vice which is the foundation of all their complaints.

It is a crime for mothers to allow themselves to remain in ignorance in regard to the habits of their children. If they are pure, keep them so. Fortify their young minds, and prepare them to detest this health and soul-destroying vice. Shield them, as faithful mothers should, from becoming contaminated by associating with every young companion. Keep them, as precious jewels, from the corrupting influence of this age. If you are situated so that their intercourse with young associates cannot always be overruled, as you would wish to have it, then let them visit your children in your presence, and in no case allow these associates to lodge in the same bed, or even in the same room. It will be far easier to prevent an evil than to cure it afterward.

If your children practice this vice, they may be in danger of resorting to falsehood to deceive you. But, mothers, you must not be easily quieted, and cease your investigations.



You should not let the matter rest until you are fully satisfied. The health and souls of those you love are in peril, which makes this matter of the greatest importance. Determined watchfulness, and close inquiry, notwithstanding the attempts to evade and conceal, will generally reveal the true state of the case. Then should the mother faithfully present this subject to them in its true light, showing its degrading, downward tendency. Try to convince them that indulgence in this sin will destroy self-respect, and nobleness of character; will ruin health and morals, and its foul stain will blot from the soul true love for God, and the beauty of holiness. The mother should pursue this matter until she has sufficient evidence that the practice is at an end.

The course which most mothers pursue, in training their children in this dangerous age, is injurious to their children. It prepares the way to make their ruin more certain. Some mothers, with their own hands, open the door and virtually invite the Devil in, by permitting their daughters to remain in idleness, or what is but little better, spend their time in knitting edging, crocheting, or embroidering, and employ a hired girl to do those things their children should do. They let them visit other young friends, form their own acquaintances, and even go from their parental watchcare some distance from home, where they are allowed to do very much as they please. Satan improves all such opportunities, and takes charge of the minds of these children whom mothers ignorantly expose to his artful snares.

Because this course was pursued thirty years ago with comparative safety, it is no evidence that it can be now. The present cannot be judged by the past.

Mothers should take their daughters with them into the kitchen, and give them a thorough education in the cooking department. They should also instruct them in the art of substantial sewing. They should teach them how to cut garments economically, and put them together neatly. Some mothers, rather than to take this trouble, to patiently instruct their inexperienced daughters, prefer to do all themselves. But in so doing they leave the essential branches of education neglected, and commit a great wrong against their children; for in after life they feel embarrassment, because of their lack of knowledge in these things.

Mothers should educate their daughters in regard to the laws of life. They should understand their own frame, and the relation their eating, drinking, and every-day habits, have to health, and a sound constitution, without which the sciences would be of but little benefit.

The help of the daughters will often make so much difference with the mother's work, that kitchen help can be dispensed with, which will prove not only a saving of expense, but a continual benefit to the children, by making room for them to labor, and bringing them into the society, and under the direct influence of, their mother, whose duty it is to patiently instruct the dear ones committed to her care,



Also a door will be closed against much evil, which a hired girl may bring into a family. In a few days she may exert a strong influence over the children of the family, and initiate your daughters into the practice of deception and vice.

Children should be instructed from their early years to be helpful, and share the burdens of their parents. By thus doing they can be a great blessing in lightening the cares of the weary mother. While children are engaged in active labor, time will not hang heavily upon their hands, and they will have less opportunity to associate with vain, talkative, unsuitable companions, whose evil communications might blight the whole life of an innocent girl, by corrupting her good manners.

Active employment will give but little time to invite Satan's temptations. They may be often weary, but this will not injure them. Nature will restore their vigor and strength in their sleeping hours, if her laws are not violated. And the thoroughly tired person has less inclination for secret indulgence.

Mothers allow themselves to be deceived in regard to their daughters. If they labor, and then appear languid and indisposed, the indulgent mother fears that she has overtaxed her daughter, and resolves henceforward to lighten her task. The mother bears the extra amount of labor which should have been performed by the daughter. If the true facts in the case of many were known, it would be seen that it was not the labor which was the cause of the difficulty, but wrong habits which

were prostrating the vital energies, and bringing upon them a sense of weakness and great debility. In such cases, when mothers relieve their daughters from active labor, they, by so-doing, virtually give them up to idleness, to reserve their energies to consume upon the altar of lust. They remove the obstacles, giving the mind more freedom to run in a wrong channel, where they will more surely carry on the work of self-ruin.

The state of our world was presented before me, and my attention was especially called to the youth of our time. Everywhere I looked, I saw imbecility, dwarfed forms, crippled limbs, misshapen heads, and deformity of every description. Sins and crimes, and the violation of nature's laws, were shown me as the causes of this accumulation of human woe and suffering. I saw such degradation and vile practices, such defiance of God, and I heard such words of blasphemy, that my soul sickened. From what was shown me, a large share of the youth now living are worthless. Corrupt habits are wasting their energies, and bringing upon them loathsome and complicated diseases. Unsuspecting parents will try the skill of one physician after another, who prescribe drugs, when they generally know the real cause of the failing health, but for fear of offending and losing their fees, they keep silent, when as faithful physicians they should expose the real cause. Their drugs only add a second great burden for abused nature to struggle against, which often breaks down in her efforts, and the vic-



tim dies. And the friends look upon the death as a mysterious dispensation of providence, when the most mysterious part of the matter is, that nature bore up as long as she did against her violated laws. Health, reason, and life, were sacrificed to depraved lusts.

I have been shown that children who practice self-indulgence previous to puberty, or the period of merging into manhood and womanhood, must pay the penalty of nature's violated laws at that critical period.

Many sink into an early grave, while others have sufficient force of constitution to pass this ordeal. If the practice is continued from the ages of fifteen and upward, nature will protest against the abuse she has suffered, and continues to suffer, and will make them pay the penalty for the transgression of her laws, especially from the ages of thirty to forty-five, by numerous pains in the system, and various diseases, such as affection of the liver and lungs, neuralgia, rheumatism, affection of the spine, diseased kidneys, and cancerous humors. Some of nature's fine machinery gives way, leaving a heavier task for the remaining to perform, which disorders nature's fine arrangement, and there is often a sudden breaking down of the constitution, and death is the result.

Mothers, give your children enough to do. If they get weary, it will not injure health. There is quite a difference between weariness and exhaustion. Indolence will not be favorable to physical, mental, or moral, health. It

throws open the door, and invites Satan in, which opportunity he improves, and draws the young into his snares. By indolence, not only the moral strength is weakened, and the impulse of passion increased, but Satan's angels take possession of the whole citadel of the mind, and compel conscience to surrender to vile passion. We should teach our children habits of patient industry. We should beware of indulging them too much. When they meet with difficulty in their labor, we must help them through it, instead of carrying them over it. It might be easier for us at the time to do the latter, but we fail to teach a useful and valuable lesson to our children of self-reliance, and are preparing the way to greatly increase our cares in the end. We should wake up in our children generous, noble principles, and urge them to active exertions, which will shield them from a multitude of temptations, and make their lives happier.

My sisters, as mothers we are responsible in a great degree for the physical, mental, and moral health of our children. We can do much by teaching them correct habits of living. We can show them, by our example, that we make a great account of health, and that they should not violate its laws. We should not make it a practice to place upon our tables food which would injure the health of our children. Our food should be prepared free from spices. Mince pies, cakes, preserves, and highly-seasoned meats, with gravies, create a feverish condition in the system, and inflame



the animal passions. We should teach our children to practice habits of self-denial, that the great battle of life is with self, to restrain the passions, and bring them into subjection to the mental and moral faculties.

My sisters, be entreated to spend less time over the cook-stove, wearing out the strength given you of God to be used for a better purpose, in preparing food to tempt the appetite. A plain, nourishing diet will not require so great an amount of labor. We should devote more time to humble, earnest prayer to God, for wisdom to bring up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. The health of the mind is dependent upon the health of the body. As Christian parents we are bound to train our children in reference to the laws of life. We should instruct them, by precept and example, that we do not live to eat, but that we eat to live. We should encourage in our children a love for nobleness of mind, and a pure, virtuous character. In order to strengthen in them the moral perceptions, the love of spiritual things, we must regulate the manner of our living, dispense with animal food, and use grains, vegetables, and fruits, as articles of food.

Mothers, is there not a work for you to do in your families? You may inquire, how can we remedy the evils which already exist? How shall we begin the work? If you lack wisdom, go to God, he has promised to give liberally. Pray much, and fervently, for divine aid. One rule can not be followed in every case. The exercise of sanctified judg-

ment is now needful. Be not hasty and agitated, and approach your children with censure. Such a course would only cause rebellion in them. You should feel deeply over any wrong course you have taken, which may have opened a door for Satan to lead your children by his temptations. If you have not instructed them in regard to the violation of the laws of health, blame rests upon you. You have neglected an important duty, which result may be seen in the wrong practices of your children. Before you engage in the work of teaching your children the lesson of self-control, you should learn it yourself. If you are easily agitated, and become impatient, how can you appear reasonable to your children, while instructing them to control their passions? With self-possession, and feelings of the deepest sympathy and pity, you should approach your erring children, and faithfully present to them the sure work of ruin upon their constitutions, if they continue the course they have begun. That as they debilitate the physical, and mental, so also the moral must feel the decay, and they are sinning, not only against themselves, but against God.

You should make them feel, if possible, that it is God, the pure and holy God, that they have been sinning against; that the great Searcher of hearts is displeased with their course; that nothing is concealed from him. If you can so impress your children, that they will exercise that repentance which is acceptable to God, that godly sorrow which worketh repentance unto salvation, not to be repented



of, the work will be thorough, the reform certain. They will not feel sorrow merely because their sins are known; but they will view their sinful practices in their aggravated character, and will be led to confess them to God, without reserve, and will forsake them. They will feel to sorrow for their wrong course, because they have displeased God, and sinned against him, and dishonored their bodies before Him who created them, and has required them to present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto him, which is their reasonable service.

"What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

You should present encouragements before your children that a merciful God will accept true heart repentance, and will bless their endeavors to cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit. As Satan sees that he is losing control over the minds of your children, he will strongly tempt them, and seek to bind them to continue to practice this bewitching vice. But with a firm purpose they must resist Satan's temptations to indulge the animal passions, because it is sin against God. They should not venture on forbidden ground, where Satan can claim control over them. If they in humility entreat God for purity of thought, and a refined and sanctified imagination, he will hear them, and grant their

petitions. God has not left them to perish in their sins, but will help the weak and helpless, if they cast themselves in faith upon him. Those who have been in the practice of secret indulgence until they have prostrated the physical and mental strength, may never fully recover the result of the violation of nature's laws; but their only salvation in this world, and that which is to come, depends upon an entire reform. Every deviation is making recovery more hopeless. None should be discouraged if they perceive no decided improvement in their health after the habit has been broken off for quite a length of time. If nature's laws have not been too long abused, she will carry on her restoring process, although it may not be immediately realized. But some have so long abused nature that she cannot recover entirely. Such must feel as long as they live, to a greater or less degree, the result of the violation of nature's laws.

We do not include all the youth who are feeble as guilty of wrong habits. There are those who are pure-minded and conscientious, who are sufferers from different causes over which they have no control.

The only sure safety for our children against every vicious practice, is to seek to be admitted into the fold of Christ, and to be taken under the watchcare of the faithful and true Shepherd. He will save them from every evil, shield them from all dangers, if they will heed his voice. He says, "My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me." In Christ they will find pasture, obtain strength and hope, and will



not be troubled with restless longings for something to divert the mind, and satisfy the heart. They have found the pearl of great price, and the mind is at peaceful rest. Their pleasures are of a pure, peaceful, elevated, heavenly character. They leave no painful reflections, no remorse. Such pleasures do not impair health, or prostrate the mind, but are of a healthful nature.

Communion with, and love for, God, the practice of holiness, the destruction of sin, are all pleasant. The reading of God's word will not fascinate the imagination, and inflame the passions, like a fictitious story-book, but softens, soothes, elevates, and sanctifies, the heart. When in trouble, when assailed by fierce temptations, they have the privilege of prayer. What an exalted privilege! Finite beings, of dust and ashes, admitted through the mediation of Christ, into the audience-chamber of the Most High. In such exercises the soul is brought into a sacred nearness with God, and is renewed in knowledge, and true holiness, and fortified against the assaults of the enemy.

A Mr. ——— professed to be a devoted follower of Christ. He was in very feeble health. Our feelings of sympathy were called out in his behalf. He could not hold his head steady. His eyes had a glassy appearance, his hands trembled, and when he walked, his knees shook; he staggered like a drunken man, and often seemed ready to fall. He was obliged to fix his eyes upon an object in the distance before him, and then make for

that object. He would thus gain force enough to reach the place he desired.

His case was shown me in vision. I saw that he was deceived in regard to himself, that he was not in favor with God. He had practiced self-abuse until he was a mere wreck of humanity. This vice was shown me as an abomination in the sight of God. No matter how high a person's profession, those who are willing to be employed in gratifying the lust of the flesh, cannot be Christians. As servants of Christ, their employment, and meditations, and pleasure, should consist in things more excellent.

Many are ignorant of the sinfulness of these habits, and their certain results. Such need to be enlightened. Some who profess to be followers of Christ, know that they are sinning against God, and ruining their health, yet they are slaves to their own corrupt passions. They feel a guilty conscience, and have less and less inclination to approach God in secret prayer. They may keep up the form of religion, yet be destitute of the grace of God in the heart. They have no devotedness to his service, no trust in him, no living to his glory, no pleasure in his ordinances, and no delight in him. The first commandment requires every living being to love and serve God with their whole mind and strength. Especially should professed Christians understand the principles of acceptable obedience.

Can any expect that God will accept a profession, a form, merely, while the heart is withheld, and they refuse to obey his com-



mandments? They sacrifice physical strength and reason upon the altar of lust, and can they think that God will accept their distracted, imbecile service, while they continue their wrong course? Such are just as surely self-murderers as though they pointed a pistol to their own breast, and destroyed their life instantly. In the first case they linger longer, are more debilitated, and destroy gradually the vital force of their constitution, and the mental faculties; yet the work of decay is sure. While they live, they curse the earth with their imbecile influence, are a stumbling-block to sinners, and cause their friends living sorrow, and an immeasurable weight of anxiety and care as they mark the signs of their decay, and have daily evidence of their impaired intellect.

To take one's life instantly is no greater sin in the sight of Heaven, than to destroy it gradually, but surely. Persons who bring upon themselves sure decay, by wrong-doing, will suffer the penalty here, and without a thorough repentance, will not be admitted into Heaven hereafter any sooner than the one who destroys life instantly. The will of God establishes the connection between cause and its effects. Fearful consequences are attached to the least violation of God's law. All will seek to avoid the result, but will not labor to avoid the cause which produced the effect. The cause is wrong, the effect right, to restrain the transgressor.

The inhabitants of Heaven are perfect, because the will of God is their joy, and supreme

delight. Many here destroy their own comfort, injure their health, and violate a good conscience, because they will not cease to do wrong. The injunctions to mortify the deeds of the body, with its affections and lusts, has no effect upon them. They profess Christ, but are not his followers, and never can be, until they cease their wrong-doing, and work the work of righteousness.

Females possess less vital force than the other sex, and are deprived very much of the bracing, invigorating air, by their in-doors life. The results of self-abuse in them is seen in various diseases, such as catarrh, dropsy, headache, loss of memory and sight, great weakness in the back and loins, affections of the spine, the head often decays inwardly. Cancerous humor, which would lay dormant in the system their life-time, is inflamed, and commences its eating, destructive work. The mind is often utterly ruined, and insanity takes place.

I was referred to Rom. i, 18-32, as a true description of the world previous to the second appearing of Christ. The only hope for those who practice vile habits is to forever leave them if they place any value upon health here, and salvation hereafter. When these habits have been indulged in for quite a length of time, it requires a determined effort to resist temptation, and refuse the corrupt indulgence. The Mr. ———, mentioned, had practiced these habits so long he seemed to have lost the control of himself. He was naturally a smart man, possessing more than common abilities.



But how were all his powers of body and mind brought into subjection by Satan, and consumed upon his altar! This man had gone so far he seemed to be left of God. He would go into the woods and spend days and nights in fasting and prayer that he might overcome this great sin, and then would return to his old habits. God did not hear his prayers. He asked God to do for him what had been in his power to do for himself. He had vowed to God, time and again, and had as often broken his vows, and given himself up to his own corrupt lust, until God had left him to work his own ruin. He has since died. He was a self-murderer. The purity of heaven will never be marred with his society. Those who destroy themselves by their own acts will never have eternal life. They that will continue to abuse the health and life given them of God in this world, would not make a right use of health and immortal life were it granted them in God's everlasting kingdom.

The practice of secret habits surely destroys the vital forces of the system. All unnecessary vital action will be followed by corresponding depression. Among the young, the vital capital, the brain, is so severely taxed at an early age, that there is a deficiency, and great exhaustion, which leaves the system exposed to disease of various kinds. But the most common of these is consumption. None can live when their vital energies are used up. They must die. God hates everything impure, and his frown is upon all who give themselves up to gradual and sure decay.

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."

Those who corrupt their own bodies cannot enjoy the favor of God, until they sincerely repent, make an entire reform, and perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord. None can be Christians and indulge in habits which debilitate the system, and bring on a state of prostration of the vital forces, which end in making a complete wreck of beings formed in the image of God. This moral pollution will certainly bring its reward. The cause must bring the results. Those who profess to be disciples of Christ should be elevated in all their thoughts and acts, and should ever realize that they are fitting for immortality, and that if saved, they must be without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. Their Christian character must be without a blemish, or they will be pronounced unfit to be taken to a holy heaven, to dwell with pure, sinless beings in God's everlasting kingdom.

It is the special work of Satan in these last days to take possession of the minds of youth, to corrupt their thoughts, and inflame their passions, knowing that by thus doing he can lead them to moral pollution, and then all the noble faculties of the mind will become debased, and he can control them to suit his own purposes. All are free moral agents. And as such they must bring their thoughts to run in the right channel. Their meditations should



be of that nature which will elevate their minds, and make Jesus and heaven the subjects of their thoughts. Here is a wide field in which the mind can safely range. If Satan seeks to divert the mind from this to low and sensual things, bring it back again, and place it on eternal things; and when the Lord sees the determined effort made to retain only pure thoughts, he will attract the mind, like the magnet, and purify the thoughts, and enable them to cleanse themselves from every secret sin. "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." The first work for those who would reform, is to purify the imagination. If the mind is led out in a vicious direction, it must be restrained to dwell only upon pure and elevated subjects. When tempted to yield to a corrupt imagination, then flee to the throne of grace and pray for strength from Heaven. In the strength of God the imagination can be restricted to dwell upon things which are pure and heavenly.

Some young persons who have knowledge in the vile practices of the world, seek to awaken the curiosity of other inquisitive minds, and impart to them that secret knowledge which ignorance of would be bliss. They are not content with practising themselves the vice they have learned. They are hurried on by the Devil, to whisper their evil communications to other minds, to corrupt their good manners. And unless the youth have fixed religious princi-

ples, they will be corrupted. A heavy penalty will rest upon those who suffered Satan to use them as mediums to lead astray, and corrupt the minds of others. A heavy curse rested upon the Serpent in Eden, because he was the medium Satan used to tempt our first parents to transgress. And whoever yields themselves to subvert others, a heavy curse from God will follow them. And although those who permit themselves to be led astray, and learn vile habits, will suffer for their sin, yet those guilty of instructing them, will also suffer for their own sins, and the sins they led others to commit. It were better for such if they had never been born.

Those who would have that wisdom which is from God, must become fools in the sinful knowledge of this age, in order to be wise. They should shut their eyes that they may see and learn no evil. They should close their ears lest they hear that which is evil, and obtain that knowledge which would stain their purity of thoughts and acts; and guard their tongues lest they utter corrupt communications, and guile be found in their mouths.

All are accountable for their actions while in this world upon probation. All have power to control their actions, if they will. If they are weak in virtue and purity of thoughts, and acts, they can obtain help from the Friend of the helpless. Jesus is acquainted with all the weaknesses of human nature, and if entreated, will give strength to overcome the most powerful temptations. All can obtain this strength if they seek for it in humility.



Jesus gives all a blessed invitation who are burdened, and laden with sin, to come to him, the sinner's friend. "Come unto me, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Here the most inquisitive may safely learn in the school of Christ that which will prove for their present and everlasting good. The uneasy and dissatisfied will here find rest. With their thoughts and affections centered in Christ, they will obtain true wisdom, which will be worth more to them than the richest earthly treasures.

Many professed Christians do not labor perseveringly. They make too little effort, and are not ready and willing to deny self. The prayer of the living Christian will be "to be filled with the knowledge of His will, in all wisdom, and spiritual understanding, that they may walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God, strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering, with joyfulness." "In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

Here is the true knowledge which should be desired, and possessed by every Christian. This knowledge will not lead to ungodliness. It will not break down the constitution, or bring a gloomy cloud over the mind; but will

impart substantial joys, and true happiness. This wisdom is divine, and flows ceaselessly from a pure fountain which gives peace, joy, and health.

Even many professed Christians seem to have no earnest desire for this heavenly knowledge, and remain in willing ignorance of this divine grace which it is their privilege to obtain. The only safety for the youth is to seek this precious wisdom which will assuredly destroy all desire for corrupt knowledge. And when they have acquired a relish for the pure, calm, satisfying joys of faith and holiness, every feeling of their being will rise in abhorrence to corrupting pleasures. All can choose life if they will. They can resist sin, take pleasure in the ways of righteousness and true holiness, and be rewarded with eternal life in God's everlasting kingdom. If they choose to corrupt their ways before the Lord, defile their own bodies and commit self-murder, they can do so; but they should remember the judgment is to sit, and the books are to be opened, and they are to be judged out of those things which are written in the books, according to their works. What a fearful, spotted record will be opened before them, of their secret thoughts, and vile acts. Sentence is pronounced upon them, and they are shut out from the city of God, with the ungodly, and miserably perish with the wicked.

Now is the time of preparation. None need to expect that God will do the work of preparing and fitting them up, without their efforts. It is for them to work the works of



righteousness, and crowd all the right-doing they can into the little space of time allotted to them before probation closes, that they may have a clean record in Heaven.

### FURTHER TESTIMONY.

We have thought proper to add to the foregoing the following Testimonies from men of high standing and authority in the medical world, corroborative of the views presented in the preceding pages. And in justice to the Writer of those pages, we would say that she had read nothing from the authors here quoted, and had read no other works on this subject, previous to putting into our hands what she has written. She is not, therefore, a copyist, although she has stated important truths to which men who are entitled to our highest confidence, have borne testimony.

#### TRUSTEES.

## CHASTITY.

### DEFINITION OF UNCHASTITY.

UNCHASTITY includes all the action, whether of body or mind, which is forbidden by the seventh commandment. And all that is therein forbidden, may be included under the two following heads:

1. *Unchastity of the mind.*
2. *Unchastity of the conduct.*

By *unchastity of the mind*, is meant the conception of unchastity in the mind, the cherishing of impure desire. All sin has its seat in the mind. The seventh commandment, like every other, extends to "thoughts and intents of the heart." "This," says Dwight, "is unanswerably evident from our Saviour's comment on this precept (the seventh commandment), 'Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery already with her in his heart.' Matt. v, 28. And with this agrees another scripture, which says, 'Out of the heart proceedeth—adulteries.'"

By *unchastity of the conduct*, we are to understand the acting out of unchastity in any of its various ways of developing sinful thoughts, as,

1. By *unchaste conversation, writing, looks, and gestures.* "Speech is the mirror of the soul." And hence it is that "by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." Matt. xii, 37. But significant looks, writing, gestures, &c., being but substitutes for words, and the tongue, are, like them, capable of being made the ministers of sin; hence, also, they must be subject to the same general law.



## UNCHASTITY IN THE SIGHT OF GOD.

Unchastity, loathsome and abhorrent as it is in the sight of good men, is infinitely more so in the sight of God. This is sufficiently evident in the conduct of the divine Being in relation to it. The prominent place he has given to the law forbidding it—having written it in common with nine others, on tables of stone, for the universal government of universal man—and, also, the sanction he has placed upon it—having announced it amid the most sublime and awful symbols of the divine presence which the world ever witnessed—these considerations make it abundantly evident that God looks upon unchastity with the extreme of loathing and abhorrence.

This view, however, is farther evidenced in the fact that throughout both Testaments, unchastity is made the subject of frequent rebuke, in language of the greatest detestation. Against no other form of sin are men more frequently and earnestly admonished.

## EFFECTS OF UNCHASTITY UPON THE BODY.

“Sexual desire, cherished by the mind, and dwelt upon by the imagination, not only increases the excitability and peculiar sensibility of the genital organs themselves; but always throws an influence equal to the intensity of the affection, over the whole nervous domain; disturbing all the functions depending on them for vital energy, which is thereby increased upon or distracted from them—and if this excitement is frequently repeated or long continued, it inevitably induces an increased degree of irritability and debility and relaxation generally, throughout the whole nervous and muscular tissues, and especially the nerves of organic life. And hence, those lascivious DAY DREAMS and amorous reveries, in which young people—and especially the idle and the voluptuous, and the sedentary and the nervous are exceedingly apt to indulge, are often the sources of general debility, effeminacy, disordered functions, and premature disease, and even premature death, without the actual

exercise of the genital organs! Indeed, this unchastity of thought—this adultery of the mind—is the beginning of immeasurable evil to the human family.”—*Graham's Lectures to Young Men*, p. 57.

## SOLITARY VICE.

Testimony to the evil effects of solitary vice comes in from all quarters. Dr. Clarke, the excellent commentator, says that self-pollution “excites the powers to undue action, and produces violent secretions, which necessarily and speedily exhaust the vital principle and energy.” The Doctor goes on to speak of its consequences, as disease and death, and then adds: “Reader, this is no caricature, nor are the colors overcharged in this shocking picture. Worse woes than my pen can relate, I have witnessed in those addicted to this fascinating, unnatural and most destructive of crimes. If thou hast entered the snare, flee from the destruction of both soul and body that awaits thee.”

Physiology also bears its testimony. Says Sylvester Graham, “By far the worst form of venereal indulgence is self-pollution.” This testimony perfectly accords with that of the divine quoted above. Says Mrs. Gove, the celebrated physiological lectress, “There is hardly an end to these diseases,”—diseases caused by solitary vice. Says the Rev. E. M. P. Wells, teacher in the school of moral discipline, Boston, “Respecting the habit of sexual self-indulgence, I should hope it was unnecessary to speak of its dangerous and evil effects.”

Wm. C. Woodbridge, well known to the educational world, speaks of it as a “solitary but fatal vice, spreading desolation through our schools and families, unnoticed or unknown.” Tissot speaks of it as the cause of painful, long, disgusting disease. Says Dr. Woodward, the justly celebrated superintendent of the Mass. State Lunatic Hospital, “A great number of the ills which come upon the young at and after the age of puberty, arise from this habit, persisted in so long



as to waste the vital energies, and enervate the physical and mental powers of the man."

Todd, in his Student's Manual, p. 147, says, "I have known very many young persons, who have daily polluted themselves with this vice—and that, too, for a number of years. . . . I have lamented the fall of many whom I have seen fall victims to premature death, for this foul cause alone,—some, while in the halls of education, and others soon after leaving college, adorned with its higher honors."

We have already heard Mrs. Gove say, "There is hardly an end to these diseases," (diseases caused by this vice.) She enumerates "dyspepsia, spinal complaint, headache, epilepsy, impaired eyesight, palpitation of the heart, pain in the side, bleeding at the lungs, spasms of the heart and lungs, diabetes, or incontinence of urine, fluor albus, or whites, inflammation of the urinary organs." Dr. Deslandes, besides many of these, instances rheumatism, affected perspiration, consumption, asthma, catarrh, polypus of the heart, affection of the bones, fevers, priapism strangury, polypus uteri, blood discharges, &c., &c.

The following startling case occurred but a few miles from the residence of the writer. It is received on credible information. A boy, about four years old, was afflicted with weakness and stiffness of limbs. (The exact symptoms the writer has not learned.) His parents at length carried him to a distant physician. The physician, after sufficient inquiry, told them that the child "*handled himself too much.*" They returned, doubting what this could mean. Suggesting the matter to some of their neighbors, their eyes were opened. "Well," said they, "we will stop that." And they did stop it, by bandaging the genitals. And lo! the child soon stopped being feeble and lame. He is now a healthy boy.

Dr. Goupil, as quoted by Deslandes, gives a full and particular account of a little boy who at two years old was epileptic, from this cause. The vice was taught him by his nurse. We say *taught* him—perhaps we should say fastened upon him at early infancy only as a notion. A notion, however, which hurried on ex-

citement and rendered him paralytic. By the most vigilant use of mechanical means for confining the hands, covering the genitals, &c., the child was at length cured; he now enjoys good health, "and with the exception of a remarkable loss of memory, retains no trace of his former indiscretions."

Instances like the above are, doubtless, of very rare occurrence, and when they do occur, must be supposed to be the result of the combined action of all the circumstances, constitutional and external, favorable to their development. That the debasing habit is often commenced before puberty, and, in the language of an eminent physiological observer, "frequently many years before," is, however, quite indisputable.

But after all, very little of the mischief of this sin is known. It is a *secret* vice; a vice which its patrons are ashamed to confess. And hence, provided they themselves know it to be the cause of their suffering, they are slow to acknowledge it. Or, if knowing this, they abandon it, and so get well; feeling under no obligation to publish their indiscretion, some medicinal nostrum obtains all the credit of their cure. And further, if knowing its evils they persist in it, in spite of them, why, they have then no motive for exposing it. But if, as is generally the case, they are ignorant of its injuriousness, then *certainly*, they will not reveal it. So that, every way, the conclusion forces itself upon us, that comparatively very little of the mischief of solitary vice is known. Indeed, very little of it is known to the victims themselves. Much less, then, to the community. This will appear still more evident in the fact that it is only quite recently that many discoveries calculated to excite any general alarm and inquiry have been made—and also in the fact that the more general effects of the vice, being only a sort of general debility, are not among the ignorant masses calculated to excite much careful inquiry, into their causes. Upon the whole, it must plainly appear that what are known of the consequences of solitary vice, can, at most, be regarded only as indices to what actually exist.

This evil is confined to neither sex. Its ravages,



though not as extensive, are, however, most dreadful among the females. We have before us numerous published cases of the horrible nature, taken from the history of both sexes.

The foregoing are among the causes which at present occur to our mind for the pre-eminently sad physical consequences of solitary vice. But whatever view the reader take of these causes, we charge him never to hazard their consequences! And this charge we give in the name of his own health and life. Whatever be his or her age, and however temperate he resolve to be, he *must* not indulge in this sin. Total abstinence must be his law. One glass excites the appetite for another. One enemy admitted, another clamors for admission; while the one admitted is weakening his power of resistance. In a word, in the language of Deslandes, "*it is clear that there is no possible security for the Onanist.*" But especially let every praying man, either cease to sip of this cup of foulness, or cease to pray "lead us not into temptation." Otherwise "his prayer itself will become sin."

#### EFFECTS OF UNCHASTITY UPON THE MIND.

Unchastity, as we have already seen, deranges, debilitates and ruins the body. Now, out of this startling fact, arises another fact, if possible, more startling. It is that unchastity deranges, debilitates and ruins the mind. That this latter fact must follow the former is clear in the consideration, that the body is the seat of the mind, and the medium through which it acts. The mind gets its simple ideas through the medium of the body. And in proportion to the perfectness of this medium does the mind improve. But when the body is debilitated, languid, sick, it is injured, and ruined as a medium for the action of the mind. Consequently the mind is then shut up to itself in weakness and destitution. Moreover, the mind increases its stock of knowledge and its energy by reflection upon its ideas. So that on ideas, by reflection, ideas grow. But when the body is feeble and sick, reflection cannot be supported. (Witness the

case of thousands of invalids.) As, then, reflection is necessary to mental improvement, and as a sound body is necessary to clear and continued reflection, so is a sound body necessary to high mental improvement. Once more—the ability of the mind to use the knowledge it *has*, is dependent upon the body. Thus, whatever weakens the body, in so far locks up the mental treasure-house against even itself. But unchastity does weaken and debilitate the body, and by consequence, as we have above seen, the mind also. But to be a little more particular.

1. By unchastity, especially by solitary vice, the mind suffers *lassitude*. By *lassitude*, we mean that dozy indifference, which the victims of venereal excesses often feel. To be sure, sensation and conscious energy, may be, for a time, and at intervals exalted, under the influence of this *unnaturalness*. But unless they be exalted to the point of insanity, the system soon relapses, and sinks into the condition above mentioned. This condition is the perfectly natural result of the exhaustion of the nervous energy upon the venereal passion. It is indicated by a general feeling of irresolution, and this more especially in the morning. Students, so many of them as are vicious, are the sorest sufferers from it. And, in general, persons of sedentary habits are most liable to it, although no victim of solitary vice is safe from it. Says Dr. Deslandes, "Young men who previously showed considerable vivacity of mind and aptitude for study, become, after being addicted to this habit, (solitary vice) stupid and incapable of applying themselves: it is evident that this transitory state which immediately succeeds the act of venery, becomes continued when this act is frequently repeated, because time is not allowed for the effects of it to pass off."—But if unchastity—more especially solitary vice—unfits students for their work, so does it young farmers, mechanics, seamstresses, &c. for theirs. It is always and every where, "evil, only evil, and that continually."

2. By unchastity, especially by solitary vice, the mind suffers permanent debility. Dr. Woodward says that loss of memory and power of application show the



devastating effects of solitary vice upon the mind. Says Todd in his Student's Manual, "Remember that the fruits of this habit (solitary vice) are, (1) great debility of the memory, (2) great prostration and foolish imbecility of the mind."

But while the memory suffers so much from this vice that it has been marked by all who have written upon this subject, still it does not suffer alone. All the mental faculties partake of the general blight. Perception is made dull and obtuse, the reasoning powers are blunted. Nothing is seen clearly—nothing is understood perfectly. The whole mental man is sunk; and this, more or less, according to the degree of venereal abuse. To all this the reflecting reader will assent.

3. From debility the mind often sinks into idiocy. We have already seen that Dr. Woodward reckons idiocy among the consequences of solitary vice. And it is no marvel that whatever induces mental lassitude and debility, should finally induce vacant idiocy itself. The tendency is all that way. "Last fall," says the author of "Facts and Important Information," &c., "I saw a young woman in a town in Massachusetts who had made herself an idiot by masturbation. A most miserable creature she was. Her looks and gestures were indescribable; licentiousness, like a foul plague, had blasted everything beautiful in her face, everything noble and lovely in her soul." Says Dr. Clarke, by this vice the mind is "often debilitated even to idiotism."

In the fall of 1844, the writer visited the Massachusetts State Lunatic Hospital. While being conducted through the various apartments, mingling promiscuously with the insane, our attention was suddenly and effectually arrested by the peculiarly haggard, frantic, wild, and fiendish appearance of a young man, turning from us with his eye turned back over his shoulder. Struck with his shocking aspect, we inquired of our attendant, a young physician, what was the cause of his insanity. "Solitary vice," was the ready reply. Thought we, solitary vice produces solitary insanity! For we never saw the like before. We further asked,

Have you many here from that cause? "A large proportion," was the reply. More than from intemperance? "Oh yes, far more." Do you find ladies alike victims of that practice? "We know no difference." We were now passing through a large room where a number of beautiful and apparently intelligent young ladies sat gazing mutely upon us. But, Dr., what are your prospects of cure in such cases? "When there is reason enough left to make the patients see and feel that by abandoning the habit they may be cured, we have good hope; but not otherwise." This last sentiment agrees perfectly with a remark of Deslandes', that "when they (crazy persons) do indulge, this act must be considered as a bad symptom, since it constitutes an insurmountable obstacle to the cure: it destroys the strength, and finally produces, in the patients, stupidity, phthisis, marasmus, and death." And surely nothing but death was wanting to fill this picture in the case of the young man to whom we have just alluded.

#### EFFECTS OF LICENTIOUSNESS UPON THE MORALS.

Lust fills the chambers of the whole soul with moral pestilence and mildew; and this, too, whatever be its mode of operating. So that solitary vice, in its depraving power, falls but little short of libertinism itself. Its tendency is downward—*downward*—*DOWNWARD*! It rapidly weakens and debases the moral character, especially if the sinfulness of it be known. We have already seen how often it hurries its victims to insanity. But far more frequently it sinks them deep in depravity without destroying their accountability. It is the parent of very much of that moral corruption so generally ascribed to the fall of Adam! Sapping the moral nature early, it saps it effectually. Reason and conscience, struggling ineffectually for a season, at length throw loose the controlling reins, and then the work is done. Few, if any, confirmed onanists, but are depraved to the level of any and every form of venereal sin. And certainly they who are thus depraved, will shrink from very few acts of crime,



whenever their interest or their passion shall summon them to wickedness. Selfish and interested motives may, to be sure, afford many, and sometimes strong, restraints. But when right—right in the sight of God—moral right is the only question, it is believed that the subjects of licentiousness will generally care but little for it.

#### CAUSES OF UNCHASTITY.

We notice bad education as a cause of unchastity. Children are born in a perfectly uneducated state. They know absolutely nothing until they learn something. Now, by education, we mean the conveying of knowledge to the mind in any and every possible way. Thus, if the mind be compared to an unsoiled white sheet, then the writing and impressing of ideas thereon we call education. Well has the poet said,

“’Tis *education* forms the common mind;”

and certainly it has much to do in forming the moral character. By bad education we mean the filling of the mind with bad ideas. And it is this that we are now to consider as a cause of the prevalence of unchastity, as discussed in former chapters.

Paul says that “evil communications corrupt good manners.” No sooner is it said, “A child is born,” than an infant is subjected to “evil communications,” i. e., put in communication with an evil, sensual world. And that manners are thereby corrupted, has been often proved while the child has been yet in the nurse’s arms, and this, too, in a most serious manner. Nurses, by manipulating infants to cure their crying, have been known to give them a *notion*, which has resulted in the habit of solitary vice. This, the reader will say, is early education with a vengeance. And yet, numbers of instances of this kind are on record. The reader must judge for himself how many are *un-recorded*. In these cases the victims, with a fatal precocity, live but to linger a little, unless they are saved by some happy influence next to miraculous.

The society of unchaste parents educates children in unchastity. It is surprising to see how early the child catches the traits of the parental character. So intimate is the parental relation, that to avoid this is quite impossible. The looks, the gestures, the words, the insinuations, at first a mystery to the child, are soon resolved by its tiny reflection. Children are listeners at a very early age; and the smile of approbative indifference with which the parent speaks of deeds of lewdness, as they are occasionally occurring in community, is very soon transmitted to the little listener; and the child concluding, of course, that that cannot be very wrong which is smiled over, learns to look upon such deeds without abhorrence.

Again, children are ever associating with their superiors in age, in a series, extending from earliest childhood up through youth, to manhood and womanhood. And this association is so intimate that generally what one knows all know, and what one does all are tempted to do. Now, through this series of associations, every licentious adult necessarily throws a licentious influence back down to the borders of the nursery. Thus, while one instructed child becomes himself an instructor, and indeed, while every child is both pupil and teacher—receiving lessons from the older, and handing them down to the younger—it is by no means wonderful that the process of education goes on so rapidly. And when this education is of a sensual character, why should it be thought remarkable that some of the forms of unchastity should be found in very early childhood. The writer knows a large family, one of the boys of which (perhaps five years old) has been repeatedly caught practicing fornication with his little sister, and also trying to seduce other little girls. He knows another little boy who will practice upon little girls what in older persons would be pronounced the height of immodesty and imposition. But in all this there is nothing singular, when the educational influences of society are considered.

Children at school are sometimes educated more in wickedness by bad associates, than they are in right-



eousness by their proper teachers. But even the education proper of the schools has sometimes been very unfavorable to chastity. The mind has, even there, sometimes lost its balance by constant efforts to strain up the intellect to the neglect and expense of the moral sentiments. The animal propensities left to a constant revel, man grows sensual and brutish.

We notice ignorance as one of the causes of unchastity. Ignorance of the extent of the claims of the law of chastity is a negative cause of sad mischief. That this law demands a chaste mind, as well as chaste words and actions, is to many a new idea. That it forbids solitary vice, is unknown to very many of the oldest men of our day. And many who deem solitary vice wrong, see nothing wrong in the cherishing of amorous reveries and "lascivious day dreams." And still more are they who have no idea of the excesses of married life being by this law forbidden. The consequences of this ignorance are, as we have already seen, just what might be expected;—one is a mental adulterer, another is an Onanist, and another still is a married, legal sensualist—and all three, if not *perfectly* at ease morally are *kind of conscientious*, and think themselves innocent of any violation of revealed law! Now who will wonder that unchastity should, under these circumstances, spread itself so rapidly.

Parents, through ignorance, leave their children an easy prey to filthy vice. Parental love, however solicitous and careful, cannot teach children lessons which itself has never learned; nor guard them against dangers which it has never itself discovered. And, hence, while many parents are "verily guilty concerning the blood of their children," many more are doomed to see their children ruined, in perfect ignorance of what might have been done to save them. For the latter, ignorance may be a sufficient apology, when to the former it shall be said,

"Ye knew your duty, but ye did it not!"

Parents have hitherto been generally and deplorably ignorant of the destructiveness of some of the

forms of unchastity, and of solitary vice in particular. The consequence of this ignorance is just what might have been expected. Their children, altogether uninstructed in their danger, have sought enjoyment in what seemed to them but an innocent gratification, and thus they have been ruined.

We notice bad diet as a cause of unchastity. By bad diet we mean the use of food and drinks of bad qualities and unreasonable quantities. Nothing pertaining to the body is more important to man, than to know when to eat, what to eat, and how much to eat; and when to drink, what to drink, and how much to drink. Man is made over again every few years, and the new bones, blood and muscles, are manufactured from what is eaten and drank. The physical health and strength of man must, therefore, depend very much upon the food and drink he takes into his stomach. No one doubts this. Some substances actually poison the body to death,—others produce but little perceivable injury—while others still produce results of a doubtful character—and yet others do the system some good; and, finally, others support, invigorate and strengthen, to the greatest possible degree. All this is plain. And plain must therefore seem the importance of that knowledge, of which we have above spoken.

But, while the state of the body depends so much and so evidently upon the diet, the state of the mind generally—and of some of the passions in particular—is by no means independent of it. The stomach in its relation to the body has been very justly called "the center of sympathies." In its relation to the mind it may certainly be safely called the seat of strong sympathies. Take as an illustration, the passion of *combateness*. Who has not seen this passion raised to a fury in a few hours by what has been thrown into the stomach? But it will be said that strong drink is no part of diet. And to be sure it ought not to be, and is very generally abandoned. But so specific are alcoholic liquors, in their action upon the venereal passion, that harlots and libertines use them, almost ex-



clusively, for raising and supporting the exhausted venereal energies!

Now, if *alcohol* can thus work upon the passions, through the medium of the stomach, why may not other articles received thereinto? Most certainly they may. There is an open thoroughfare between the former and the latter. Thus are the passions well or ill affected by every thing of substance that is eaten or drank.

Food, too, which is not in its nature unduly stimulating, from being taken in too large quantities, produces alarming disturbances among the passions. Whatever is taken into the stomach must be disposed of in some way or other. Otherwise health fails and the body dies. Moreover, the organs of digestion, nutrition and elimination, are capable of disposing of no more than a certain quantity of food and drink without injury. The instant, therefore, that they are tasked beyond the design of their organization they suffer fatigue and irritation. When the overtasked system is in good tone, it will, for a time, perhaps, relieve itself by vomiting, diarrhea, &c. But it soon becomes incapable of thus relieving itself, and either dies in the attempt or sinks into a decline. Now with all this, and especially with whatever pertains to the stomach, the nervous system strongly sympathizes, and through that the passions are disturbed, irritated and inflamed.

The disturbance produced by excessive alimentation is quite mechanical. The food passing from the stomach but half digested—for it is obliged to pass out to give place to more—irritates the mucus membrane or inner coating of the bowels with its coarseness and its crudity, while from it the lacteals are capable of extracting but very imperfect chyle. Now for the same reason that the half digested food irritated the bowels, this poor chyle irritates the duct through which it is conveyed into the circulation. And now the blood, loaded with this crude chyle, goes irritating through its million channels. The blood being thus imperfect, the glandular secretions from the blood, are imperfect also. The liver secretes crude and acrid bile, while the acrid secretions of the kid-

neys go scalding along the ureters, inducing stranguary and every species of disease about the urinary system.

Now, not to be too tedious, we affirm that any person of common sense and common reflection, must see that this general mechanical irritation of the system must seriously effect the passions generally, and the venereal passion in particular. The location of the genital system is right in the way of this irritation and necessarily participates largely in it.

Now, in view of the connection between the stomach and the passions, who can wonder that unchastity so much prevails in this land of gluttony. Who, in view of this, can wonder that venereal propensities are so early and strongly developed in children. Weaned on pork, and brought up to eat all they can of the most exciting articles of food—all they can at regular hours, and all they can between meals—who is surprised that they should be early drunk with amative passion? Especially when it is considered, as has been already remarked, that the acting organs of this passion are so located as to feel the full force of these dietetic abuses. Says the author of "Facts and Important Information," "If children are brought up in an idle, effeminate and luxurious manner, the passions are, like tinder, ignited by the first spark that falls upon them. If the laws of physiology were obeyed, and external excitements removed, the sexual appetite would sleep on, as nature designed, till the transition from boyhood to manhood, instead of being forced into action at from five to ten years of age, as we have often seen."

Says O. S. Fowler, as quoted by the same, "The diet or food of the young prematurely develops amateness. There unquestionably exists a reciprocal relation between the body and the animal propensities. We have no room to introduce the *proof* of this principle, although it is indispensable in order to enforce the inference that tea, coffee, snuff, tobacco, candies, flesh, &c., stimulate the animal propensities and excite amateness. The position, however, is undeniable, that whatever artificially excites the body, there-



by stimulates the animal propensities more than the intellectual and moral faculties. Tea, coffee, flesh, spices, &c., are unquestionably highly stimulating, much more so than cold water, breadstuffs, vegetables, &c., and therefore kindle the animal propensities; and as the relation between the body—and especially the stomach and amateness, is more direct and powerful than between the other parts, the evidence is inevitable, that they proportionably kindle impure desires."

Says Graham, "This [the sexual] propensity is more or less powerful and imperious, according as the dietetic and other habits are more or less correct."

Dr. Woodward, of the Massachusetts State Lunatic Hospital, expresses the same sentiment. And indeed, to this sentiment all dietetic writers which we have seen, agree. And who does not? The sentiment is almost as plain as a geometrical axiom.

Sedentary habits, unrelieved by sufficient exercise, increase the liabilities to unchastity. Exercise is the law of the human constitution. It is penal in its claims. Sedentariness ever brings suffering, while virtuous activity is health, strength, and peace. This is as evident in philosophy as it is in fact. One might as well look for limpid and pure cold waters in the stagnant marsh, as for the freshness and vigor of health, whether of body or mind, in the victim of unrelieved sedentariness? By it the circulation is rendered irregular, the fluids of the system gravitate to a point, while the body lacks the elasticity necessary to restore the equilibrium. The lower abdominal region stagnates and becomes irritable and uneasy, inducing costiveness, urinary difficulties, &c. But from this sedentariness the genital system is perhaps the greatest sufferer. Excited in common with the bowels, &c., almost—and often quite—to inflammation, its secretions become profuse, and its peculiar excitement often nearly constant. This excitement is thrown back upon the brain, thereby filling the mind with lascivious thoughts, and painting lascivious images upon the canvass of the imagination.

Bad books, pictures, &c., are a powerful exciting cause of licentiousness. No one has ever seriously

disputed the apostolic declaration that "evil communications corrupt good manners." Neither is the old proverb questioned that "a man is known by the company he keeps." But evil communication with books, no less than with men, corrupts good manners. And the sentiment is worthy of passing into a proverb, that a man is known by the books he reads. Books are men. Not paper men, but men on paper. And these influence the character of their readers as do men in the flesh, the character of their companions. Show me a man's books, the books of his choice, and I will show you the man himself. Let me control the reading of a rising generation and I will prophesy. A bad book is a bad associate—a good book, a good one. Sensual books tend strongly to make sensual readers. Many novel readers know this, and every reflecting, candid person will admit it. How can the person who is ever feasting his senses with fancy scenes in the history of sensual lovers, drawn out to the very life, by the masterly hand of some intellectual sensualist, and all aglow with the high colorings of their author's amorous imagination; how can such a person fail to assimilate his own character more or less with that of his books? As well may a person take coals in his bosom and not be burned.

Not long since, a young murderer imputed the deed which brought him to the gallows to the reading of a popular novel. But thousands are they, who, from the time that Alcman wrote the tune of amorous love, have imputed—and might have imputed—their fall from virtue to the reading of voluptuous writings. By these we do not mean merely or chiefly such writings as, from their open obscenity, are read only by the grossly corrupt, and that only in secret. These are comparatively harmless, in the present state of society. But we rather mean such writings as make a show of modesty, are interspersed with excellent sentiments, and set off with fine embellishments, while, at the same time, by their designed associations and sly allusions, they play in upon the animal passions, and keep them under constant excitement. And it is because very much of modern reading is of this very



character, that the animal passions, unstayed by instinct, are prevailing with so much force throughout the community. Speaking of unchastity, Dr. Dwight says, "Most unhappily, aids and allurements to this licentious indulgence are never wanting. Genius, in every age and in every country, has, to a great extent, prostituted its elevated powers for the deplorable purpose of seducing thoughtless minds to this sin. The unsuspecting imagination, ignorant of the dangers spread out before it, has, by this gay and fiery serpent, glittering with spots of gold, and painted with colors of enchantment, been allured to pluck the fruit of this forbidden tree, and hazard the death denounced against the transgressor. The numbers of the poet, the delightful melody of song, the fascinations of the chisel, and the spell of the pencil, have been all volunteered in the service of Satan, for the moral destruction of unhappy man."

French novels are generally reckoned among the worst. And they do much to make and keep France what she is for unchastity. Look at that young lady with the last novel of the French school in her hand! You know what it is, and therefore you know what her thoughts are, and what her taste is. And if purity, the stainless whiteness of an angel's breast, is the bosom whose companionship you seek, you turn from her society, and seek a friend whose loveliness of soul has never been profaned by such communings.

Margaret Prior, that fearless friend of the friendless, says in her journal, "Several instances of the baleful influences of novel-reading, having recently come under my observation, I feel constrained to lift a note of warning against the indulgence of this pernicious habit. . . . Nothing tends more to destroy virtuous principles, or promote the growth of unholy appetites and passions. It is a real barrier to all useful acquirements, and, if persisted in, will effectually counteract the most faithful religious instruction." Novels are my prayers, said the dying harlot. The evils of licentiousness can never be stayed, so long as voluptuous reading keeps up the excitement of the public imagination.

*Want of employment.* Constant laudable employment is every way important to mankind. Neither body nor mind can be preserved in health and purity without it. Of this fact, the history of man affords abundant and conclusive evidence. He only is secure who has some good and settled object at which he aims, and who is diligent in pursuing it. But he is comparatively secure. This is evident in the consideration that, attracted constantly ahead, and with all his powers properly tasked in the prosecution of his design, he can have no time to parley with passion, or to range the imaginary fields of sensual pleasure. He is doing a work at least, if not a great work, and cannot come down. We would not be understood to say that laudable employment, either of the body or mind, taken alone, is so great a safeguard against sin; but we mean the employment of both together.

But on the other hand, when the mind and the body are not properly employed, and the person is living on without any sufficient object, a sort of sluggish inanity pervades the system, time hangs heavily, and he feels that a want of employment is a want of happiness. The restless imagination now roves the fields of sensuality in pursuit of pleasure. It revels amid the amours and loves of its own creation, and soon brings the system under strong lascivious influences. The higher feelings of the soul, finding no objects worthy their activity, the lower feelings—the propensities—enter into it, and take possession. Hence it is that the idle and the lazy are far more generally the victims of vile habits, and especially of licentious ones. He who has nothing to do is almost certain to do wickedly, and become the pest of society. But whether he become a pest to society or not, he is a pest to himself. Nor is it long before he resorts to unlawful and filthy means for relieving himself of the burden of himself. Every lascivious person knows that when he is without any settled object, and out of employ, he is far more subject to passion than when he is diligently pursuing some interesting object. He knows that, for instance, in the morning when he feels no sufficient call of business to bring him early off from his bed, he is almost



sure to lounge amid lascivious imaginary scenes, and the clamor of sensuality. And so of every hour of dreamish leisure.

Want of employment, then—laudable, interesting employment—during the hours of waking, is a prominent cause of the evil we are discussing. And considering the number of young persons in both city and country—but in the former more especially—who are brought up to idleness—street dandies and parlor ladies—who can wonder that sexual sensuality so much prevails?

#### CURE OF UNCHASTITY.

We notice good education as a means of cure. We have already noticed bad education as a cause of unchastity. We now remark that in so far as bad education is a cause of this evil, in so far as good education is a cure. Let all those, then, who would perform a part in the removal of this evil from society, have an eye to correct and sufficient moral, physical, and intellectual education. A good moral education is of the highest importance in this matter. As the moral sentiments do most to form the character, so should they be most carefully educated. Children should be taught the importance of right and wrong, and the consequences of them. They should be early taught to make right a primary source of enjoyment, and to look upon wrong as a primary source of misery. They will then see that a life of mere sensuality is quite unworthy of their dignity, and hence will look higher into the sublimer region of the moral virtues for the means of happiness.

The intellectual education of children must also be attended to. The power of perception and of reasoning from causes to consequences must be early improved. Then will they be far more likely to see and flee from the sins of destruction. They will be more capable of appreciating any arguments used with them against their evil practices—and indeed they will be far more likely to discover the evil of any secret prac-

tice, of the evil of which they may never have been admonished.

When the intellect and moral sentiments are justly cultivated, the subject may be regarded as comparatively safe. But the cultivation of these would be far less important, were it not that when they are healthy and active, the lower passions, and especially the amative one, find far less motive power in the imagination, and consequently are comparatively and sufficiently quiet. The person with an active intellect, sanctified by the moral sentiments, rises above the world of passionate sensuality, and looks down upon it with unmingled disgust.

We have elsewhere noticed society as an educator. Parents and guardians will see the importance of withdrawing their children as much as possible from bad society. Children, however, must not be secluded from society altogether. This were, under ordinary circumstances, as injudicious as it is judicious, to give them the purest society which their case and location admits. Let parents and guardians remember, too, that they are necessarily the prime educators of their children, and govern themselves as an enlightened love for children will dictate. Much may be done, too, by school-teachers, ministers, and indeed by every one whose influence extends to children. But, in order to teach, parents, teachers, ministers, &c., must be themselves instructed. But some there are who tell us that instruction on the subject of unchastity can serve only to aggravate the evil, or at least that it does more hurt than good.

“The whole question, therefore,” to apply the language of Dr. Combe, “resolves itself into this, whether it is more beneficial to enlighten the understanding so as to dispose and enable it to control and direct this feeling, or (under the influence of error in philosophy and false delicacy founded upon it,) to permit it to riot in all the fierceness of animal instinct, withdrawn from the eye of reason, but not thereby deprived of its vehemence and importunity.” We hope every reader—and especially every doubting one—will pause a minute over this last quotation, and ask him-



self, whether it is better that man should be governed by passion, than that passion should itself be subject to enlightened reason, and he be governed by the latter, aided by revelation? If it be not better, then let reason be enlightened upon the subject. If light be better than darkness, (and Jesus says he that walketh in the dark stumbleth,) then let light be poured upon the path of every son and daughter of Adam. Raise the light over the shoals;—lift the beacon indicating the whirlpool! hoist the flag over the precipice!—point to the cloud in which wrathful fires are gathering, and cry in the ears of all, DANGER! DANGER! “Do thyself no harm!” “Because there is wrath, beware!!!” In a word, say anything—do anything which can serve to alarm the old, the young, the middle aged, of the dangers from any and all the forms of unchastity.

The prevention and cure of unchastity requires strict attention to diet. It requires neither feasting nor fasting, however; but a plain, moderate, and yet sufficient, diet. A living made up of articles of food which, while they are sufficiently nutritious, and easy of digestion, are at the same time free from acrid and exciting qualities. And hence all greasy, highly seasoned, rich, and mixed dishes should be carefully avoided. Not irritants, but emollients, are demanded by the delicate mucous coatings of the internal system. And therefore it is that ardent spirits of every kind, as well as fashionable table teas, coffee, &c., are so mischievous in their operations. These may excite the passions, but never allay them. For this last purpose no beverage is so excellent as that soft, limpid element which gushes from a thousand springs.

A diet chiefly or wholly farinaceous and vegetable, is evidently best adapted to allay passionate excitement. Flesh-meat diet is more stimulating than vegetable. Consequently it is plain that all those who suffer, or are exposed to suffering, from too high venereal excitement, should abandon it. All food need be, and is, stimulating; some kinds more, and some less. Some persons also can bear the more stimulating. But every person who is already suffering from excitement

in the passions should seek the plainest, softest table articles—avoiding recipied cakes, pastries, too much salt, saleratus, &c., &c.

When children shall be taught correct habits of diet, much, very much, will be done toward the removal of secret vice and other species of unchastity from society. A good diet is of great price; but especially so to children whose systems are yet in their greenness, but rapidly advancing to maturity. The fabric takes its character very much from the material wrought into it. Let parents bear this in mind. Let them lay this to heart; and cease to encourage precocious and extravagant venereal excitement in their children, by pampering them with miserable dainties!—meat instead of milk—pork instead of bread. For by such indulgent pampering, a growth of passion has, in numberless instances, been excited, which has eventually brought down the parents' grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. \*

*Activity.* Nothing is more important to the prevention and cure of unchastity, than activity. More lust is generated during the leisure hours of sluggish inactivity than during all others. It is during these stupid seasons of dreamishness, that the blood accumulates upon the venereal system, while the imagination strolls about creation, bringing in the fruits and flowers of every forbidden tree. A lascivious mood, resulting in lascivious conduct, is of course the consequence. Whereas, on the other hand during the hours, of laudable, engrossing activity, the blood flows regularly and cheerfully and impartially throughout the whole system. Consequently no part of the system is unhealthfully excited. At the same time, the mind, engaged in directing the body's exertions, the imagination has no opportunity for arousing and pampering the passions, and so they remain tranquil. Doubtless this is according to the experience of all who have any experience in this matter. Said a physician to the writer a short time since, “I have had repeated applications for advice from young men who had become so enslaved to solitary vice, that they knew not how to break away, unless the temptation



could be softened. And my advice," said he, "to all is, be active! When you awake in the morning, get up—go out—work—keep active during the day. When night comes, go to bed only to sleep—follow up this course day after day—&c." Now this advice is to the point. And those who follow it will do more to shun temptation and sin, than can be done for them by all the medical prescriptions for this matter by all the sons of Æsculapius, since the world began. Let lascivious sufferers take the idea. Let parents take the hint, and bring up their children to active labor. Yes, labor, ye sons and daughters of idleness, and of the parlor. Labor is what your delicate constitutions need. Sow to idle fashion if ye will, but be assured that if you sow to this fashion, you will reap lasciviousness, which you may not control without a struggle.

"And what shall we do," was the significant inquiry of certain persons of John the Baptist. Would to God that this might be the language of all my readers in view of the claims of the cause of moral purity. Now we do not profess to stand in the place of Christ's forerunner. But as reflection and examination have taught us something, we think we may safely presume to give some directions to as many readers as are sincerely asking the above question. And,

First, we will suppose our inquirer to be a parent. As a parent, then, you are to consider well the exposure of your children. You are to read with interest whatever professes to be able to open your eyes on this point. You are to feel the exposure of your children, and count no labor too great or too expensive to secure them in virtue. You must shut up from them the avenues to unchastity. You must early make them see that you are solicitous for them, and also make them understand why you are so. Against the mischievous habit of solitary vice you must watch and warn faithfully. You must begin this work early. If you wait till foul society has filled their minds with lascivious ideas and images, you will not only find the task of instructing them far more difficult, but also far less promising of permanent good. Begin early, then. Fix a pure habit upon the child, and a fear of break-

ing it while it is yet greatly incapable of understanding the whys and wherefores of your wishes. But do not neglect the whys and wherefores too long. Introduce these into the minds of your children as soon as their minds open sufficiently to receive them. John Newton said he had no fear of the enemy's filling the hearts of the young with tares if he could first get them filled with wheat. But, be assured, parent, that in order to get the advance of Satan in this matter you must begin early—even at break of day.

Your own example, as we have elsewhere intimated, must be every way correct. You must make your children see that you discountenance and detest unchastity in all its forms. You must watch the social influences which your children are receiving from abroad. It is easy to crush the viper in the egg. Whenever your children become impurely insinuating, as is too often the case among children generally, correct at once, by judicious measures (but always more by moral suasion than by force), the dangerous symptom. Pay strict regard to diet, to cleanliness, to education. Be judicious in the selection of pictures, books, &c., for the amusement and improvement of your children. But for more of this see above, where we have already considered some of these points.

But if your children are already large, and your duties yet undone, even in this case do not despair. To be sure, no future faithfulness can atone for past neglect. For this you must seek forgiveness. But still you may do much for their benefit and salvation. Instruct them at once; not, however, in the nature of the sin; nine-tenths of them understand this already; but instruct them in the consequences. Lift up the glowing horrors of solitary vice before them, and bid them see and understand. By this means as many as are hitherto uncorrupted will be confirmed in virtue. Those few who may be supposed to be ignorant of the action of the sin, as they have no habit formed, will of course form none in view of such awful hazard. And as to those who are already corrupted, they will, in the picture set before them, see a strong reason why they should flee out of Sodom before sundown. So



that every way instruction is safe. Give it! Give it! By the love you bear your children withhold it not.

Or finally, is my inquirer a victim of solitary vice, or of excessive legal commerce? Pale and exhausted, you would find relief. Well, thank God, relief is at hand! Abstinence will relieve you. It will cure you, provided your constitution is not too much injured. But how shall I abstain? say you. That's the question at issue. For, haunted day and night, worried down and overcome by temptation, it seems as though "the hand of necessity is upon me." You are right; the hand of necessity is upon you—necessity for your abstinence. You must abstain, or live uselessly, both to yourself and others—and die prematurely; and, added to this, die amid horrible reflections! You are destroying yourself—you must not persevere. "But," say you, "even the visions of the night provoke unchastity. We are defiled even in our dreams." But you know that the character of our sensations while asleep, depend very much upon the character of our thoughts and actions while awake. You must be chaste while awake, if you would be so while asleep. But your case demands that we be a little more particular. Would you be purified, you must pay strict attention to your diet. Avoid condiments, spices, and all highly seasoned and highly stimulating food and drinks. Confine yourself to a light vegetable diet; a diet which, if possible, shall overcome all tendency to costiveness. This is very important. Drink only water. Eat light suppers. Rise early—as early as you awake. You know your danger from morning lounging. Be active. Labor all you can without great fatigue. Bathe often in cold, or nearly cold, water. Carefully avoid excitement of every kind. Consider your dignity as a moral and intellectual being, "bearing the impress of Divinity." Rise above sensual thoughts. Remember that you are allied to angels no less than to brutes—to the purely spiritual no less than to the exclusively sensual. Lift up your head and heart. Feel above sensuality, and, under God, you will soon be above it.

J. C. Jackson, M. D., in his work on "The Sexual Organism," says—

And right here I wish to impress upon the moral sense of my readers,—and I wish I could do it with such force and skill as that the impression should never perish,—the fact, that this vice, so general with our boys, and by no means very uncommon with our girls, though acted in secret, is a great, I think I may say the great, cause of their failure to achieve distinction in educational acquisitions, and high position in the departments of active life, to which upon the adult age they address themselves. We who are watchful of the welfare of our youth, and are particularly desirous to have them grow up and become good and wise, noble and Christian men and women, have our hearts ache not seldom at the sight of the ill habits into which they fall, and of which they take no pains for concealment. They eat, they drink, they dress, they play, they work unhealthily; and of course, in the long run, to the great detriment of their mental and moral capacities: but all these, bad as they are, do not impinge upon the powers of the mind and of the heart, as does the habit of secret or solitary sexual excitement. This seems to be the sin against which Nature raises up her most solemn and indignant protestations, and for the commission of which she imposes her most fearful retributions. And these fall not sparingly, but ruinously.

How sad to think that a young man or woman of originally fine intellectual powers, and naturally keen moral sense, should lose whatever of beauty and truthfulness and high capacity he or she possesses, simply by yielding to the clamors of a mere animal propensity!

But after all, much as we value mind, and pride ourselves upon its possession in large degree, this vice has power to strike a deeper and more ruinous blow when it touches the heart. It is "by the heart man liveth unto righteousness;" and it is far better, though I know that this will not be a very popular remark, to be weak in one's mental faculties, than it



is to be wicked in one's moral nature; and masturbation ruins the spiritual sense.

And at this point in the argument, perhaps I may as well specify such articles of food as I think, in general terms, boys and girls who are suffering from indulgence of their sexual propensities may and may not use.

Of these I prefer foods made of grains and fruits. The habit with us, as a people, of giving to our children animal food largely, cannot be too severely criticised. A vegetarian myself, I am willing that the reader should make due allowance in his own mind for what he may suppose to be a prejudice of mine in respect to the use of flesh-meats as food. That they contain nutrient properties I do not, of course, deny; and that they may be eaten by adults with less injury to health than by children, I also do not deny. That they are, however, as staple articles of food, unfit for children to eat, I do most resolutely and stoutly affirm. Their effects upon the organism, as respects both the rapidity and quality of its development, are palpably injurious, and tend directly to the subversion of the relations that constitutionally exist between the organs of nutrition and the nervous system.

L. B. Coles, M. D., in his work on the "Philosophy of Health," says—

Self-indulgence is another degrading, contemptible vice, which has destroyed its thousands and tens of thousands annually, both of males and females. Setting aside a comparison of its sinfulness, it is doing more injury to society than all other forms of licentiousness put together. Boys, and even girls, of respectable origin, of splendid original talents, have, by this unnatural practice, not only destroyed their physical systems, but have reduced their minds to comparative imbecility, and in many cases to complete idiotism. It would seem as though, if one were lost to all sense of moral accountability on this subject, the idea of making one's self an idiot, to be a walking monument of self-destruction, would be enough of itself to

deter the most inveterate devotee to his passions, from such habits.

The bodily diseases produced in this way are frequently very formidable, and baffle the most profound skill. Sometimes they appear in the form of spinal affections, which send distress and wretchedness throughout the whole nervous system. Accompanying this, will often be found a morose disposition, dejection of mind, and melancholy. These affections are common to males and females.

